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Amendments to the Claims:

1. (currently amended)   A method comprising:
automatically sending a discovery message to a node;
enabling node access if a response to the discovery message is received; ~~and~~
automatically checking a link to the node to make sure that the node is still accessible;
and

implementing a state machine with a connected and a disconnected state and
automatically transitioning from the disconnected state to the connected state when a response to
a discovery message is received.

2. (canceled)

3. (original)   The method of claim 1 including notifying a client wishing to access a
node when a state transition is made based on a response to a discovery message being received.

4. (cancelled)

5. (previously presented)   The method of claim 1, including automatically checking
said node at timed intervals in order to maintain a connected state.

6. (original)   The method of claim 1 further including automatically sending a message
to determine whether the node is still accessible after said response to said discovery message is
received.

7. (currently amended)   An article comprising a medium storing instructions that
enable a processor-based system to:
send a discovery message to a node in response to a request to access the node;
enable node access if a response to the discovery message is received; ~~and~~
automatically check a link to the node to make sure that the node is still accessible; and

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implement a state machine with a connected and a disconnected state and to automatically transition from the disconnected state to the connected state when a response to a discovery message is received.

8. (canceled)

9. (original)   The article of claim 7 further storing instructions that enable the processor-based system to notify a client wishing to access a node when a state transition is made based on a response to a discovery message being received.

10. (canceled

11. (previously presented)   The article of claim 7, further storing instructions that enable the processor-based system to automatically check the node at timed intervals.

12. (original) The article of claim 7 further storing instructions that enable the processor-based system to automatically send a message to determine whether the node is still accessible after said response to said discovery message is received.

13. (currently amended)   A system comprising:
a network interface; and
a storage coupled to said network interface, said storage storing instructions that enable said system to automatically send a discovery message to a node over said interface to access the node and to enable node access if a response to the discovery message is received, said storage ~~further~~ storing instructions that enable said system to automatically check said node at timed intervals in order to maintain a connected state, and said storage further storing instructions that enable said system to implement a state machine with a connected and a disconnected state and automatically transitioning from the disconnected state to the connected state when a response to a discovery message is received.

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14. (original) The system of claim 13 wherein said system is a processor-based system.

15. (original) The system of claim 13 wherein said storage stores instructions to cause said system to automatically send a message to determine whether the node is still accessible after said response to said discovery message is received.

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